REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration is requested of all rejections based on objections to informalities in the claims:

The three informalities in claims 2 and 10 have been corrected. Examiner is thanked for finding these.

Reconsideration is requested of all rejections based on 35 U.S.C. 102:

The limitations of claim 5 have now been included in claim 1, rendering the latter to now be allowable.

The structure claimed and discussed by Crue et al. teaches, in his FIG. 3 for example, that the upper (leftmost in the figure) reader shield 52 is immediately adjacent to flux return pole 38 with write pole 34 being on the far side of write coil 44. Contrast this with the structure taught by the present invention (our figures 2 and 3) where return pole 23 is on the far side of coil 11 relative to upper reader shield 26.

Yano et al. teach directly away from the present invention. Our FIG. 2 and, more particularly, our FIG. 3 show the flux return pole, the write pole, and the upper reader shield as all terminating in the same plane which, it is clear from FIG. 2 and from lines 13 and 14 of claim 10, is the air bearing surface or ABS. Additionally, our claim 1 includes the limitation that "magnetic flux.....does not flow through either of said magnetic shields.". Contrast this with Yano et al. who explicitly teach that flux return pole 34 terminates at a distance D above the ABS (paragraph 0028) and, furthermore, for their invention to work it is necessary for some of the return flux to flow through the

upper reader shield (see their FIG. 3 as well as paragraphs 0032 - 0036).

Reconsideration is requested of all rejections based on 35 U.S.C. 103:

Regarding claim 12, we must respectfully disagree with examiner's argument that, since both the cited prior art and the present invention refer to the thicknesses of various films in microns, specific claimed thicknesses are merely a matter of routine optimization. In particular, the lower thickness of the range claimed for the first spacer layer is a re-statement of the limitation "magnetic flux... .....does not flow through either of said magnetic shields" because when the write pole is closer to the upper reader shield than about 1.5 microns some of the flux through the write pole 22 will be inductively transferred into the upper reader shield. The upper thickness limitation of about 4 microns seen in claim 12 reflects the second objective listed in the summary (.... that the separation between the read and write heads..... be less than what is currently available in the prior art).

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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